

Charter Schools USA FAQs

Q: What sort of tutoring or additional support services will be offered to struggling students? What support will be offered to students who do not perform to the expectations of the TSO?

A: When learning gains are not progressing at an agreed upon rate for all stakeholders, there are additional resources available. For students that require additional intervention, before and after school tutoring will also be available. These sessions provide the additional instructional minutes needed for those students requiring extra intervention to bring them up to grade level expectations. Teachers use a set curriculum in small group setting, targeted to students' skill deficiencies, as determined by diagnostic and formative data.

The school will also meet the individual needs of students who, based on diagnostic data, have been identified to have significant skill deficiencies and/or read two or more years below grade level through additional instructional minutes using a research-based intervention program in intensive courses, small group pull-out sessions and content area integration. Students will receive additional instruction in a small-group setting with more frequent progress monitoring to ensure accelerated progress toward grade level expectations.

Classroom teachers remain in continual contact with all stakeholders by updating the Personalized Learning Plans, using data derived from ongoing progress monitoring, Student Information System Narrative Report Cards, and benchmark testing results.

Q: What systems do CSUSA have to support teachers in the classroom and provide professional development to help teachers improve their practice?

A: CSUSA provides opportunities for professional development in a wide variety of methods and for support and monitoring.

Classroom Walk-thru: The CSUSA principals and leadership team visit each classroom at least every other week and provide immediate feedback on classroom environment, student engagement, and high yield instructional strategies. The walk thru form will be used as a non-evaluative way to communicate a teacher's areas of strength, as well as possible opportunities for growth. Teachers are strategically partnered to observe each other's instruction to share best practices and support one another in refining their craft as teachers.

School Site Visit Observation: The School will participate in the CSUSA School Site Visit Observation Process, which occurs at a minimum of twice a school year. The CSUSA Site Visit Process examines three critical factors; classroom management, student motivation, and instructional strategies. The observer, a teacher, instructional coach or administrator from the Charter Schools USA network who completed the training session, takes part in the lesson for 30-45 minutes to examine how the teacher is integrating Educational Best Practices within their lesson to promote student learning. Immediately after the observation, the teacher and observer discuss areas of strength and brainstorm solutions and best practices to address areas of opportunity.

Weekly PD sessions and team meetings: CSUSA teachers share common planning times and have a weekly meeting guided by instructional coaches. These sessions are targeted to improve their planning and preparation and data analysis and use of data to drive instruction.

Faculty Professional Development: Full faculty professional development will be provided at regularly scheduled sessions and will be targeted based on data analysis. Staff meeting time will be used for professional development only, keeping housekeeping items to a minimum or communicated in other ways.

Q: What is CSUSA's success rate with other urban high schools?

A: CSUSA has a strong record of success with high school students. Both Coral Springs and Gateway Charter High Schools have met Annual early Progress on the Florida Comprehensive Achievement Test for the Past Three Years. Additionally, Coral Springs has been an A school for the last six years in a row. Please see below for additional statistics from the two schools.

Coral Springs Charter School:

- 422 AP exams taken out of 857 students
- 59% AP Pass Rate
- 95% Graduation Rate

Gateway High School:

- 430 AP exams taken out of 908 students
- 20% AP Pass Rate
- 97% Graduation Rate

Q: What process does CSUSA plan to use to communicate decisions and policies to the community?

A: CSUSA will use a variety of methods to communicate decisions and policies and monitor satisfaction with our methodology and change if these methods are not meeting the expectations of the community. Some methods of communication are as follows: announcements on the school website, announcements and parent messages on the Student Information System (SIS), phone messages through Parent Link, and paper letters delivered to students or mailed directly to parents.

Q: Will CSUSA commit to keeping the agricultural education classes at Emma Donnan? Additionally, what will happen to the related arts classes such as choir, band, drama, and art? (What will happen to related arts classes such as choir, band, drama and art?)

A: CSUSA is extremely responsive to student needs and maintains an unwavering dedication to student achievement, engagement, and academic success. We believe in educating the whole child, and putting students first. Therefore, we will continue to offer core, enrichment, and elective classes which follow our commitment to meet the needs of all students.

Q: How will the different learning styles of students be assessed and addressed?

A: In following the CSUSA Educational Model, in the beginning of the school year all students will take baseline assessments which, combined with previous year data, will guide instructional decisions. Learning style surveys and student conferences will help teachers understand how each student learns best. Through the Personalized Learning Plan (PLP) this baseline information will be captured and used to set ongoing goals and instructional plans.

**Q: What services will be provided for students with emotional needs?
How will special education services be addressed by each TSO?**

A: CSUSA is committed to the meeting the needs of every child. Therefore, our administration, faculty, and staff consistently collaborate with guidance counselors, social workers, speech therapists, and school psychologists to ensure that all students receive appropriate accommodations. They also work to ensure that all students are placed in the least restrictive environments which will meet their educational, social, and emotional needs.

Q: How will English learning services be provided by each TSO?

A: The mission of the ELL program is to prepare and successfully equip bilingual, bicultural, and bi-literate students to meet the needs of their global community. In order to support our Limited English Proficient (LEP) students, CSUSA will equip them with targeted instructional support necessary for their academic success. We will use a structured English immersion methodology to fulfill this goal, as this strategy has been shown to demonstrate the best results with English language learners. In addition, our extended school day and school year will provide needed additional learning time for these students.

Q: How will each TSO improve culture of the schools where they work?

A: CSUSA will take great strides to ensure student satisfaction, a safe and orderly learning environment, and high expectations for all students. For each of these indicators, we have detailed plans that include regular monitoring to measure progress toward overall cultural improvement.

Q: Will there be a college-prep focus and curriculum at the turnaround academies? Will there be college entrance assistance?

A: CSUSA strongly believes in preparing secondary students for the progression to the Collegiate Level. As a result, there will be a strong emphasis on college prep focus and curriculum. We plan to offer courses that provide instructional strategies on collegiate writing, as well as SAT Prep and guidance. Furthermore, our faculty and staff are cognizant of college requirements and will provide entry assistance to all students.

Q: Will the curriculum be modified so that it addresses the culture and heritage of the turnaround academy's population?

A: The Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum is based on the Indiana State Standards and Common Core State standards. CSUSA believes that all students can achieve mastery of these standards. The delivery

method, strategies, and resources used to guide students toward mastery of these standards will be specifically targeted to address the culture, heritage, and interests of the students.

Q: Will students still have access to social workers and counselors?

A: Yes, CSUSA believes that social workers and guidance counselors are vital to the success and well being of the whole child. Therefore, we will continue to offer guidance and social services in all schools.

Q: What will happen to the school's athletic programs?

A: CSUSA strongly believes in extracurricular activities, and offers programs on its school campuses. We have received confirmation that Howe and Manual are eligible to participate in District School Tournaments, and we plan to keep programs at the schools. Additionally, our middle schools offer extracurricular activities and we will maintain similar programs at Emma Donnan Middle School.

Q: Will the TSOs continue to have after-school programs at their sites?

A: Yes, there will be rich after-school opportunities as each CSUSA site. There will be both voluntary and mandatory tutoring after-school at each CSUSA site as well as enrichment and extracurricular activities as determined by student interest. Some activities may include athletic clubs, music clubs, arts and journalism clubs, national clubs such as Key Club, DECA, and National Honor Society, and academic focused clubs in specific content areas.

Q: How will each TSO involve parents in their schools? What expectations will each TSO have for parents?

A: CSUSA believes that parent and community involvement is critical to the success of students. Teachers and staff members develop volunteer opportunities for parents to bring more connection between home and school. Parents are highly encouraged to contribute volunteer hours through these opportunities as well as through attendance at parent conferences, school events, and parent advisory sessions.

The TSO will also involve parents through innovative technology on the Student Information System, giving parents real time information about student performance and school events. There will also be open forum style advisory sessions in which parents will be invited and encouraged to participate in school decision making.

Q: How will parents be involved with the TSOs after the transition year?

A: Parent Involvement is integral to the success of all schools. Therefore, parents will have ample opportunities to participate in the TSO Process after the transition year. They will be able to volunteer at school events and activities, attend monthly PTO meetings, as well as provide feedback during School Advisory Council Meetings. Additionally, TSO Principals will maintain bilateral communication with parents, in order to attain feedback on concerns and suggestions.



Q: How can the community get involved in supporting the turnaround academies' new leadership?

A: CSUSA has always maintained that community involvement is paramount to the success of schools. As a result, there will be many opportunities for community collaboration with TSO leadership. These include but are not limited to, continued partnership collaboration, attendance, participation, and sponsorship of community forums and events, as well as membership and participation in School Advisory Councils. All forums will allow community stakeholders to provide pertinent feedback regarding the TSO Schools.

Q: Will the Alumni Associations be preserved?

A: CSUSA strongly believes that each alumni association is an essential aspect of the Indianapolis Community. Therefore, we plan to collaborate diligently with each association in order to ensure that all associations are preserved and become integral partners in the TSO process.